

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of providing help to people with disabilities, comprising the steps:
 - a) organizing a network of people with disabilities and of volunteers for helping people with disabilities, each of the persons with disabilities and each of the volunteers having a portable, wireless communications device;
 - b) establishing a first database identifying and having information about a plurality of people with disabilities and for each of the persons with disabilities, identifying at least one specific disability said person has; and establishing a second database identifying a plurality of volunteers, and for each of the volunteers, identifying at least one specific disability said volunteer is willing to assist;
 - c) after the first and second databases are established at least one of the persons with disabilities, using one of the wireless communications devices to transmit a request for help;
 - d) in response to said request, using a matching server to obtain information about the person making the request from the pre-established first database and to use that information obtained from the first database to identify in the second database one of the volunteers who is willing to assist with the specific disability said at least one of the persons with disabilities has,
 - e) after said one of the volunteers is identified, using the matching server to notify said one of the volunteers of the request for help via one of the wireless communications devices; and

f) the matching server providing information to at least one of (i) said one of the volunteers, or (ii) the person making the request, to enable said one of the volunteers and the person making the request to physically find and meet each other; and wherein:

the step of establishing the first database includes the steps of identifying and having information in the first database about each of said plurality of people with disabilities, and for each of said people with disabilities, identifying in the first database,

- i) a description of the needs of the person,
- ii) the type of handicap of the person,
- iii) a history of prior assistance given to the person,
- iv) a list of volunteers who have helped the person in the past, and
- v) a description of methods of how to help the person; and

the step of establishing the second database includes the steps of identifying in the second database the plurality of volunteers, and for each of said volunteers identifying in the second database,

- i) the name of the volunteer,
- ii) skills of the volunteer,
- iii) services that the volunteer can offer,
- iv) a history of prior help given by the volunteer, and
- v) a list of people the volunteer has helped.

2. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein:

step (c) includes the step of one of the persons with disabilities using one of the wireless communications devices to transmit a request for help to the network; and

step (d) includes the step of the network identifying said one of the persons with disabilities to said one of the volunteers via one of the wireless communications devices.

3. (Original) A method according to Claim 2, further comprising the step of, the volunteers providing at least one service selected from the group comprising:

- i) reading a newspaper or other information to a blind person,
- ii) translating a conversation into sign language, and
- iii) bringing requested items to one of the persons with disabilities.

4. (Original) A method according to Claim 2, further comprising the step of using a global positioning system to identify the location of said one of the persons with disabilities, and to identify one or more of the volunteers in the vicinity of said one of the persons with disabilities.

Claim 5 (Cancelled).

6. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 2, wherein the matching step includes the step of:

using a matching server to search the people with disabilities and the volunteers to find a list of candidate volunteers and methods of help;

sending a request to each of the candidate volunteers;

interacting with the candidate volunteers to find a final choice volunteer; and

sending a final request to the final choice volunteer.

7. (Currently Amended) A system for providing help to people with disabilities, comprising:

a network of people with disabilities and of volunteers for helping people with disabilities, each of the persons with disabilities and each of the volunteers having a portable, wireless communications device; and

a first database identifying and having information about a plurality of people with disabilities and for each of the persons with disabilities, identifying at least one specific disability said person has; and establishing a second database identifying a plurality of volunteers, and for each of the volunteers, identifying at least one specific disability said volunteer is willing to assist;

at least one of the persons with disabilities after the first and second databases are established, using one of the wireless communications devices to transmit a request for help; and a matching server to obtain information about the person making the request from the first and second pre-established database, in response to said request, and to use that information obtained from the first database to identify in the second database one of the volunteers who is willing to assist with the specific disability said at least one of the persons with disabilities has, and

the matching server including

- i) means to notify said one of the volunteers, after said one of the volunteers is identified, of the request for help via one of the wireless communications devices; and
- ii) means for providing information to at least one of (i) said one of the volunteers, or (ii) the person making the request, to enable said one of the volunteers and the person making the request to physically find and meet each other; and wherein:

the first database identifies, for each of said plurality of people with disabilities,

- i) a description of the needs of the person,
- ii) the type of handicap of the person,
- iii) a history of prior assistance given to the person,
- iv) a list of volunteers who have helped the person in the past, and
- v) a description of methods of how to help the person; and

the second database identifies, for each of said plurality of volunteers,

- i) the name of the volunteer,
- ii) skills of the volunteer,
- iii) services that the volunteer can offer,
- iv) a history of prior help given by the volunteer, and
- v) a list of people the volunteer has helped.

8. (Previously Presented) A system according to Claim 7, wherein:

one of the persons with disabilities uses one of the wireless communications devices to transmit a request for help to the network;
the network includes
means for identifying said one of the persons with disabilities to said one of the volunteers via one of the wireless communications devices.

Claim 9 (Cancelled).

10. (Original) A system according to Claim 8, further comprising a global positioning system to identify the location of said one of the persons with disabilities, and to identify one or more of the volunteers in the vicinity of said one of the persons with disabilities.

Claim 11 (Cancelled).

12. (Previously Presented) A system according to Claim 8, wherein the matching means includes:

a matching server to search the people with disabilities and the volunteers to find a list of candidate volunteers and methods of help;

means for sending a request to each of the candidate volunteers;

means for interacting with the candidate volunteers to find a final choice volunteer; and

means for sending a final request to the final choice volunteer.

13. (Currently Amended) A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for providing help to people with disabilities, said method steps comprising:

- a) organizing a network of people with disabilities and of volunteers for helping people with disabilities, each of the persons with disabilities and each of the volunteers having a portable, wireless communications device;
- b) establishing a first database identifying and having information about a plurality of people with disabilities and for each of the persons with disabilities, identifying at least one specific disability said person has; and establishing a second database identifying a

plurality of volunteers, and for each of the volunteers, identifying at least one specific disability said volunteer is willing to assist;

- c) after the first and second databases are established, at least one of the persons with disabilities, using one of the wireless communications devices to transmit a request for help; and
- d) in response to said request, using a matching server to obtain information about the person making the request from the pre-established first and to use that information obtained from the first database to identify in the second database one of the volunteers who is willing to assist with the specific disability said at least one of the persons with disabilities has,
- e) after said one of the volunteers is identified, using the matching server to notify said one of the volunteers of the request for help via one of the wireless communications devices; and
- f) the matching server providing information to at least one of (i) said one of the volunteers, or (ii) the person making the request, to enable said one of the volunteers and the person making the request to physically find and meet each other; and wherein:
the step of establishing the first database includes the steps of identifying and having information in the first database about each of said plurality of people with disabilities, and for each of said people with disabilities, identifying in the first database,
 - i) a description of the needs of the person,
 - ii) the type of handicap of the person,
 - iii) a history of prior assistance given to the person,
 - iv) a list of volunteers who have helped the person in the past, and
 - v) a description of methods of how to help the person; and

the step of establishing the second database includes the steps of identifying in the second database the plurality of volunteers, and for each of said volunteers identifying in the second database,

- i) the name of the volunteer,
- ii) skills of the volunteer,
- iii) services that the volunteer can offer,
- iv) a history of prior help given by the volunteer, and
- v) a list of people the volunteer has helped.

14. (Previously Presented) A program storage device according to Claim 13, wherein:

step (c) includes the step of one of the persons with disabilities using one of the wireless communications devices to transmit a request for help to the network; and

step (d) includes the step of the network identifying said one of the persons with disabilities to said one of the volunteers via one of the wireless communications devices.

15. (Original) A program storage device according to Claim 14, wherein said method steps further comprise the step of, the volunteers providing at least one service selected from the group comprising:

- i) reading a newspaper or other information to a blind person,
- ii) translating a conversation into sign language, and
- iii) bringing requested items to one of the persons with disabilities.

16. (Original) A program storage device according to Claim 14, wherein said method steps further comprise the step of using a global positioning system to identify the location of said one of the persons with disabilities, and to identify one or more of the volunteers in the vicinity of said one of the persons with disabilities.

Claim 17 (Cancelled).

18. (Previously Presented) A program storage device according to Claim 14, wherein the searching step includes the step of:

- using a matching server to search the people with disabilities and the volunteers to find a list of candidate volunteers and methods of help;
- sending a request to each of the candidate volunteers;
- interacting with the candidate volunteers to find a final choice volunteer; and
- sending a final request to the final choice volunteer.

19. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step of using the matching server to identify one of the volunteers includes the step of:

- using the matching server
 - i) to identify several candidate volunteers,
 - ii) to establish dialogues between the person requesting help and the candidate volunteers, and
 - iii) on the basis of said dialogues, selecting one of the candidate volunteers to assist the person requesting help.

20. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the matching server includes a dialogue module, and comprising the further step of using the dialogue module to establish communications between the volunteer and the person making the request for help.

21. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step of using the matching server to identify one of the volunteers includes the step of using the matching server to identify volunteers who have already assisted the person making the request for help.

22. (Currently Amended) A method ~~according to Claim 1~~, wherein:

the step of establishing the first database includes the steps of identifying and having information in the first database about each of said plurality of people with disabilities, and for each of said people with disabilities, identifying in the first database,

- i) a description of the needs of the ~~server~~ person,
- ii) the type of handicap of the person,
- iii) a history of prior assistance given to the person,
- iv) a list of volunteers who have helped the person in the past, and
- v) a description of methods of how to help the person;

the step of establishing the second database includes the steps of identifying in the second database the plurality of volunteers, and for each of said volunteers identifying in the second database,

- i) the name of the volunteer,
- ii) skills of the volunteer,
- iii) services that the volunteer can offer,
- iv) a history of prior help given by the volunteer, and

v) a list of people the volunteer has helped;

the person making the request and a group of the volunteers are on a train;

the step of using one of the wireless devices to transmit the request includes the steps of sending a signal through the wireless device and through a local cellular provider that sends a signal to a global positioning system that notifies the person making the request of the location of one of said group of volunteers;

the step of using the matching server to obtain information about the person making the request includes the step of the matching server retrieving an image of the person making the request to determine which type of people have already assisted the person making the request;

the step of using the matching server to identify one of the volunteers includes the step of the matching server making a candidate list with names of volunteers, ranking of satisfaction of people with disabilities, and ways the volunteers may serve the people with disabilities;

the step of using the matching server to identify one of the volunteers includes the further steps of

- i) providing the matching server with a dialogue module, a comparator and a chooser,
- ii) the matching server establishing dialogues between the person making the request and the candidate volunteers, said dialogue including several questions, and
- iii) after several questions, the dialogue module and the comparator sending information into the chooser which selects one of the candidate volunteers to assist the person requesting help; and

the method comprises the further steps of:

the wireless device of the person making the request sending information to the local cellular provider that then sends a signal to any volunteer on the train the wireless device of said any volunteer,

said one of the volunteers translating a conversation into sign language, including the steps of

- i) the person making the request, using said one of the wireless devices to transmit an audio conversation to said one of the volunteers,
- ii) said one of the volunteers translating said audio conversation into sign language, and
- iii) visually depicting the sign language of said one of the volunteers on a screen of the person making the request.

23. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the person making the request needs medicine, and the step of notifying said one of the volunteers includes the step of notifying a second of the volunteers, and comprising the further step of said one and said second of the volunteers cooperating in the retrieval and delivery of medicine to the person making the request.

24. (New) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step of using the matching server to identify one of the volunteers includes the steps of:

the matching server making a candidate list with names of candidate volunteers, providing the matching server with a dialogue module, a comparator and a chooser,

the matching server establishing dialogues between the person making the request and the candidate volunteers, said dialogue including several questions, and after several questions, the dialogue module and the comparator sending information into the chooser which selects one of the candidate volunteers to assist the person requesting help.

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